



## Lesley Mills

### Owner Griswold Special Care

**L**esley Mills, born in England, was the first girl born in her grandparent's home after five generations of single boys in the aftermath of WWII, and was a born entrepreneur. As a young girl she began selling blackberries and frogs. As a teen in the United States she sold greeting cards, seeds, and Avon door-to-door. She attended Temple University, but when Yale accepted women in '69, Mills came for her senior year.

In the '70s, Mills co-founded Puter Associates, which became the nation's largest processor of medical data that reviewed the cost and quality of care for Medicare patients. In the '80s she renovated and ran a 25-room Victorian Inn. Then she returned to the health care arena, purchasing a 15-client

company called Griswold Special Care. Ms. Mills now owns five special care facilities in New Haven, Hartford, Waterbury, Meriden and New London.

Griswold Special Care places a significant emphasis on affordable care offering tailor-made schedules, live-in service and the highest quality professional caregiver at an affordable cost. Mills' offices have achieved the highest ratings from Special Care Inc, and have been selected as the exclusive provider by both the Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Association's respite programs.

Mills takes an active role in advocating for women in business and is currently serving as the CT president of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO); she is a founding

member of WOPAC (Women Organizing Women); she established Griswold *LifeTales* which provides grants to aspiring writers who spend time with the elderly or terminally ill and then create written legacies of their lives; she was the first woman to be named a member of the New Haven Connecticut Rotary Club and has received many honors for her dedication and hard work.

Lesley also established Special Care Foundation, a non-profit organization that grants short-term funding to qualified individuals who would otherwise be unable to afford care.

# 2004 Small Business Person of the Year